United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Southwestern Region Forest Health Arizona Zone Office | 2500 S. Pine Knoll Drive Flagstaff, AZ 86001-6381 FAX (928) 556-2130 Voice (928) 556-2073

File Code: 3420 **Date:** October 25, 2005
Route To: (2400)

Subject: Proposed 2006 Williams Follow-up Mistletoe Treatments, Williams RD (williamsrd)

To: District Ranger, Williams RD

This letter serves as an evaluation for the proposed FY 2006 Williams Follow-up Mistletoe Treatment Project submitted by Mark Herron, Silviculturist. Mark and I met and evaluated the sites in early October. The costs associated with completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis of the proposed project area were covered with Suppression/Prevention dollars in 2004. Funds are now requested for costs associated with felling noncommercial dwarf mistletoe infected ponderosa pine trees and girdling overstory infected trees on 69 acres.

All 4 sites proposed for treatment had received commercial and/or noncommercial silvicultural treatments within the past 20 years, including shelterwood seed cuts and intermediate thinning. Monitoring and follow-up treatments were part of the District's original silvicultural plan for these areas. Some sites have regenerated and/or dwarf mistletoe infection levels have increased. Sites proposed for treatment are in ponderosa pine or pine-oak forest type. These areas were selected based on walkthrough examinations and NEPA outcome.

Two of the proposed sites have lightly to moderately dwarf mistletoe infected trees that were retained as a seed source during the previous commercial entries (McDermit and El Paso timber sales (TS)) in order to regenerate these sites. On another McDermit site, all infected trees were removed within a 4 acre opening and seedlings planted. On all three sites, infected mid and overstory trees are now threatening newly established regeneration. The prescription calls for the removal, or girdling, of all infected trees within 60 feet of established regeneration. These treatments will reduce dwarf mistletoe infection levels and disease impacts on established regeneration.

The fourth site was part of the Kaufman II timber sale. It is multi-storied, composed of large blackjacks, poles, and saplings in the openings. Dwarf mistletoe infection is light. All dwarf mistletoe infected trees less than 18"DBH will be felled, while those greater than 18"DBH will be girdled. Since dwarf mistletoe levels are so low, this treatment will be very effective in reducing the impacts of disease over a long period.

In addition to agreeing with the prescriptions proposed for this project the following slash treatment guidelines should be considered:

1. Generate slash between late summer and the end of December, if possible.
2. If creating slash piles, place them in stand openings as much as possible and place the largest diameter slash on the outside of the pile to promote quick drying. Tepee style slash piles

with branches and small-diameter slash in the middle and the larger diameter material on the outside.

If large-diameter slash will be given away as free use firewood, inform the public not to pile the green slash next to trees in their yard. Preferably, the firewood should be bucked into short lengths (i.e., less than 14 inches), peeled, split, and placed in direct sunlight.

If you have any questions regarding this evaluation, please let us know. We can be reached at (928) 556-2075 (mfairweather@fs.fed.us, Mary Lou) or (928) 556-2073 (janhold@fs.fed.us, John Anhold).

/s/ Mary Lou Fairweather
MARY LOU FAIRWEATHER
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cc:
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